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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

An experimental program oriented toward the education of culturally disadvantaged youth is designed: to increase academic achievement level; to increase the acquisition of culturally approved social skills; to motivate students to excel in academic and nonacademic school-oriented pursuits; to change, for each student, those values which may retard his social mobility; to develop positive vocational attitudes, skills, and self-concepts; to develop a consistent program of public relations to both inform and involve the community; and to evaluate the program.

Extra personnel have been provided in M.A.P. schools, and other experts are available as resource people. A sequential approach to curriculum has been developed in language arts, mathematics, science, reading, and social studies; eventually grades 1-9 will be upgraded. A social studies unit on Civil Rights and a literature unit on Famous Americans designed to reflect the contributions of the American Negro have been developed. Scheduling makes possible faculty planning sessions and enrichment activities.

Summer school emphasizing language arts and mathematics was held. Remedial reading clinics were included, and school volunteers freed teachers from routine clerical work. The world of work program provided work experience and vocational guidance for potential dropouts. Personality development was emphasized. A Learning Caravan brought information to parents and helped strengthen school-home partnerships. Closed circuit television was used, and a curriculum materials development center was established.

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MADISON AREA PROJECT / SYRACUSE ACTION FOR YOUTH

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The Madison Area Project, an experimental program oriented toward the education of culturally disadvantaged children in a particular area of Syracuse, is now entering its third and final year under the Ford Foundation auspices. However, the programs it initiated, along with many new ones, will be expanded under a new program, Syracuse Action for Youth, sponsored by the Mayor's Commission For Youth, Inc. In addition, two other aspects of the problems of urban education, viz., teacher training and integration, will be tackled by programs in cooperation with Syracuse University.

Developed cooperatively by the board of education, the Youth Development Center and the School of Education of Syracuse University, the state education department, and the Ford Foundation, the Madison Area Project includes two elementary schools, one junior high, and one senior high. Its goals are:

1. To increase the academic achievement level of the students.
2. To increase the acquisition of culturally approved social skills.
3. To motivate students to excel in academic and nonacademic school-oriented pursuits.
4. To change, for each student, those values which may retard his social mobility.
5. To develop positive vocational attitudes and skills in alienated youth.
6. To develop positive self-concepts among the students.
7. To develop a consistent program of public relations to both inform and involve the community.
8. To evaluate the program.

Extra personnel has been provided in M.A.P. schools, including remedial reading teachers, extra guidance counselors, and instruction specialists. In addition a staff of coordinators, specialists in the areas of audiovisuals, public information, curriculum, vocational placement, volunteer recruitment and mental health are available as resource people to the schools. They also initiate special programs and activities as needed.

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HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

Scope of the Project

During the second year of the Project, 1963-64, emphasis was placed on developing a sequential approach to curriculum. The major subject areas - language arts, mathematics, science, reading and social studies were broken down into sequential "ladders". As the 1964-65 school year opens, several of the grades will be "ungraded", and pupils matched to ladders rather than grades, studying at different levels depending on the subject. Such curriculum change will continue until grades 1 - 9 are entirely ungraded.

An inspection of the curriculum has begun to see that it reflects the contributions of the American Negro, both to America's history and to her literature. A beginning was made in the development of a social studies unit on CIVIL RIGHTS and a literature unit on FAMOUS AMERICANS.

New and ingenious ways of scheduling have been put into operation by the principals of Croton, Irving, and Madison so that teachers of similar fields could be free at the same time for planning periods. Continuous regrouping to develop various skills was made possible by the new scheduling. The planning teams regrouped their pupils at any time there was a need for specific skill

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development. Madison's schedule also accommodated a new kind of grouping procedure, according to the stage of personality development. Scheduling also made it possible for field trips and enrichment activities to be a part of the pupil's learning experiences.

Two Hundred and eighty fourth through ninth grade, pupils took advantage of the opportunity to attend a special summer school with emphasis on language arts and mathematics. The teachers, chosen from the planning teams at the three schools, had further opportunity to develop the sequential ladders. Assisting were 20 urban teacher interns, graduates of some of the country's best universities, who have joined the Urban Teacher Preparation Program to work for a master's degree in urban teaching.

Project Able, a program of the New York State Department of Education to motivate underachievers to use all their talents, has been integrated into the Madison Area Project.

Another type of team approach in each school is centered around mental health. In addition to programming for individual youngsters with emotional problems which hindered them from learning, the mental health people conduct in-service training programs for teachers; serve as psychology-of-learning consultants to the planning teams; and as leaders of group guidance classes. These are free-wheeling, anything-goes sessions attended once weekly by every pupil.

Reading Clinicians have been able to increase by two years the reading level of pupils referred to the remedial reading clinics. The reading specialists also were available as resource people to the planning teams, and conducted some in-service sessions to help teachers.

The curriculum changes, trips and many of the enrichment activities could not be undertaken were it not for the School Volunteer Program. Since teachers give up "free" periods to planning team meetings, volunteers perform many of the clerical duties usually reserved for such times, thus freeing these teachers for the professional endeavor for which they were trained. University student volunteers sometimes serve as team assistants, recording the minutes of sessions, etc.

An arithmetic consultant from Syracuse University provides leadership for changes in the mathematics curriculum at both the junior high and elementary level.

Twenty-three potential dropouts were persuaded to stay in school and try a new approach. Their schedules were arranged to provide an early morning vocational guidance class, then core subjects until lunch time. After that, paid work-at "status" jobs, as office workers, mechanics' helpers, and food service assistants. Only three of the 23 left school, although all of them reached the "magic"age of 16 during the school year, and had earlier signified their intentions of leaving school. The philosophy underlying the World of Work program is one of individual growth.

Personality development - helping youngsters to discover "Who am I? Where am I going?" - is an ongoing emphasis in every activity and instructional program. Materials are being developed to help students see themselves as worthy people, valuable to society. Floor to ceiling bulletin boards installed during the first year at all three schools continued to be used so that student work, photographs of students in action, and inspirational material about successful people could be displayed.

Closed circuit television is used as an instruction tool as well as a device to promote social growth and ego development.

The importance of school-home partnerships was stressed with the inauguration in April of the first Learning Caravan. This traveling exhibit brought information to parents about what the school is doing and how they could help their children. Its theme was "Back Them Up" and stressed the importance of a good start, of parents' need to understand what goes on at school, the importance of reinforcing school experiences at home, and of seeing their children as worthy individuals. It pointed out that opportunities are unlimited if a child gets an education. Photographs were used extensively in the exhibit, which was located near churches, supermarkets, and housing project parking lots to make it accessible to parents. Future caravans will discuss the new ungraded school, the world of words, goal setting, and others.

Significant strides were made in interpreting standardized tests of pupil growth, and in developing measurements for evaluating teaching styles and methods. The results of the tests given at the end of the second year are being analyzed from several points of view: personality grouping, sex, classroom grouping, ability groupings, grade, teacher, and a change score. As this is written the evaluation is incomplete.

Preview of Year Three

The third, (1963 - 64) year of Madison Area Project marked the beginning of a triangular partnership on behalf of Syracuse youth. The three institutions are the Syracuse School District, the Mayor's Commission For Youth and Syracuse University. Ten of Syracuse's 44 public schools will benefit directly from these programs.

The Mayor's Commission For Youth, financed by federal (President's Committee on Delinquency, etc.,) state and local funds, will incorporate the Madison Area Project schools into its 8 - school program to "erase delinquency, dependency, and dropouts". The program has three thrusts: Education, including compensatory, remedial, guidance, and mental health services; Employment, retraining and rehabilitating past dropouts; and community services, including neighborhood "help" centers and study halls, and drawing on the resources of the community in changing undesirable aspects of their neighborhood environments.

The Mayor's Commission has already established a Curriculum Materials Development Center to prepare suitable classroom materials for disadvantaged youngsters.

In cooperation with Syracuse University, two programs to help disadvantaged youngsters have been started. One is the Urban Teacher Preparation Program. Through a grant to the university and school district, a program is underway to train teachers to meet the special problems of urban areas. The four semester course features an orientation, a paid interneship, academic work, and on-the-job seminars, and leads to a Master's Degree. Madison Area Project schools are the "laboratory" for the interneship and orientation, following the Conant concept of a "teaching hospital" experience for preparing teachers.

Recently the Office of Education and the National Institute of Mental Health granted funds to the University and the school district for a study-facilitation program of school integration. The Youth Development Center of

Syracuse University will handle the research aspects, and school district personnel, formed into a four-member integration unit, will implement, with the help of teachers and administrators of the receiving schools, the School District's program for school integration. Over 300 pupils in Madison Area Project schools were affected by new boundary changes and now attend "integrated" (formerly predominantly white) schools.

The program's objectives are " to identify and classify the problems that may arise in the integration process, identify systematically the effects of integration on the attitudes and behavior of the people involved, demonstrate effective ways of handling the problems, evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures applied, and disseminate findings concerning both problems and procedures for possible application in other settings. It is hoped to promote,... the development of positive attitudes and behavior, comfortable interracial interaction, and an optimal educational environment in the newly integrated schools."

A complete summary of the Madison Area Project's second year, and a preview of the third, including the new program thrusts, is described in the Project's 32 - page, photographically illustrated report "Laboratory For Change - The Madison Area Project" available (50¢) from Madison Area Project, 1001 Almond Street, Syracuse, New York.